

MONTANA WOLF PROGRAM - WEEKLY REPORT

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Ken McDonald, Wildlife Bureau Chief
SUBJECT: Wolf Program Activities and Related Information
WEEK OF: May 21 - 27, 2011

Contributors to the Montana Wolf Weekly are Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP), Universities, USDA Wildlife Services (WS), the National Park Service (NPS; Glacier NP; Yellowstone National Park will be reported in the Wyoming Wolf Weekly), US Forest Service, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and the Blackfeet Nation.

Highlighted activities relate to: monitoring, wolf-livestock interactions, outreach and education, research, law enforcement, and other miscellaneous topics of public interest. The Weekly Report will be available each Monday, covering the previous week. It and other wolf program information (including the 2010 annual report) can be found on the FWP website.

WOLF MONITORING ACTIVITIES:

Nothing to report.

WOLF-LIVESTOCK ACTIVITIES:

5/23: WS confirmed a calf was killed by wolves on private land east of Darby. The calf had likely been killed about a week earlier. The Divide Creek pack is known to use the area and FWP has authorized the removal of 4 wolves from the pack. A shoot-on-site permit has been issued to the landowner.

5/23: WS confirmed that a calf was killed by a wolf or wolves on private land near Silverstar. Cattle will be moved off the ranch in a week or so. WS has been authorized to trap and kill any wolves on the ranch with the confirmed depredation. WS has also been authorized to place a radio collar if possible since there is no longer a collar in the area.

5/23: WS confirmed that a wolf or wolves killed two buck sheep near Sieben on private land. This is believed to be the same wolves involved in the incidents in the Canyon Creek area recently. WS completed the management action on May 24 by killing one wolf and collaring one wolf. However, WS was authorized to continue running traps for another week near the Sieben depredations and to kill any wolves trapped near the depredation during this time. WS killed an additional wolf on private land near Sieben on May 25.

5/26: WS confirmed that a wolf or wolves killed a calf on private land near Dell. WS has been authorized to kill one wolf and collar one wolf to learn more about wolf activity in the area. A lone wolf has been seen in the area recently.

5/26: WS confirmed that a calf was killed by wolves on private land in the Grasshopper Valley area. Two wolves were seen in the area. WS completed the authorized management action of killing one wolf from the Bannack pack in the Grasshopper Valley on May 26.

5/27: WS confirmed that 2 calves were killed by wolves on private land near Avon. At this point it is unknown what pack was involved. FWP has currently authorized WS to remove offending wolves on site and has issued a shoot-on-site permit for the landowner for 2 wolves on their private property.

5/27: WS confirmed a horse was killed by wolves on private land southwest of Darby. The horse had been attacked and was driven into a fence where it died from its injuries. On 5/26 a single wolf was caught chasing livestock on a neighboring ranch and was shot and hit but could not be found. The Trapper Peak pack is believed to be involved and 5 wolves are estimated in the pack. The pack killed cattle in 2010 and pack removal was attempted at that time but not successfully. FWP has again authorized the removal of the pack and a shoot-on-site permit has been issued to the landowner for 5 wolves.

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION:

Nothing to report.

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES:

Nothing to report.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND RELATED ACTIVITIES:

5/21: A landowner west of Hamilton in the Bitterroot Valley shot an adult male wolf that was attacking his dogs. One dog was injured and was taken to the vet but will likely be OK. The wolf is thought to be a disperser as there are no known packs in the immediate vicinity.

5/25: A landowner in the Big Flat area west of Missoula reported to FWP that their Yorkie terrier had been killed by a wolf on May 23. The dog was let outside first thing in the morning and disappeared. The landowners reported seeing a gray wolf leaving the property. FWP scouted the area on 5/25 but tracking conditions were poor due to heavy rains the day before. FWP will continue to keep a close eye on this area.

OTHER UPDATES:

Nothing to report.

To learn more about Montana's wolf population, the Montana program and to help FWP monitor wolves by reporting wolf sign, visit FWP online. Use the following shortcut link and be sure to update your bookmarks: <http://fwp.mt.gov/wolf>

To anonymously report a dead or injured wolf or suspected illegal activity, call: 1-800-TIP-MONT or 1-800-847-6668.

To request an investigation of injured or dead livestock, call USDA Wildlife Services directly in western Montana / Helena area at 406-458-0106 or in eastern Montana at the statewide office at 406-657-6464. Or, call your nearest FWP representative to have your call referred to Wildlife Services.

If you have a confirmed or probable livestock death loss due to wolves, USDA Wildlife Services will supply you with a copy of the Loss Reimbursement Application form. For more information, see <http://liv.mt.gov/liv/LM/index.asp> Or, contact the Livestock Loss Reduction and Mitigation Program Coordinator, George Edwards at the Montana Department of Livestock at 406-444-5609.